

Deployed!



U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 3rd Class Kittie VandenBosch

An F/A-18E Super Hornet from the "Eagles" of Strike Fighter Squadron One One Five (VFA-115), piloted by Lt. Corey L. Pritchard, makes the first operational carrier arrested landing of the Super Hornet signifying the start of its maiden combat deployment.

underway for its maiden combat deployment with Carrier Air Wing (CVW 14).

"Personally, it's exciting for me because it is the first deployment I've ever done, and you don't sign up just to train, you sign up for combat," Pritchard said. "The fact that the Super Hornet is a brand-new jet on its first deployment is very exciting because nobody has done that in the 19 years since the first Hornet came out."

The trap was a major event for the squadron, according to Cmdr. Jeff Penfield, the squadron's commanding officer. "The first trap was a major milestone for the Super Hornet program, for Naval Aviation, and this squadron," said Penfield. "A lot of people throughout the Navy team, and the industry team, have been working very hard to get this plane out on its first deployment. A lot of dedication - a lot of long hours. It was huge for them. You can't overemphasize enough how much it means to the whole team to have the plane out on deployment."

The Eagles of VFA-115 and Lincoln are likely to support Operation Enduring Freedom during their deployment.

The \$57 million fighter will serve not only as a fighter-interceptor, but also as a tool of force projection, by conducting combat missions in hostile skies when needed.

If called to combat, the Super Hornet gives warfare commanders

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The USS *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) Battle Group deployment will be filled with firsts.

Starting off that string of firsts was Lt. Corey L. Pritchard of the Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA-115), the "Eagles," from Naval Air Station Lemoore, Calif. Pritchard took the honor of being the first pilot to trap aboard the carrier July 24 in the F/A-18E Super Hornet, as it gets

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not only the option of extended range but also increased firepower.

The Super Hornet serves as a platform for the AIM-9 Sidewinder, AIM-7 Sparrow, AIM-120 AMRAAM, Harpoon, HARM, SLAM and Maverick missiles, along with the JDAM, JSOW and other precision-guided ordnance. The increased weapons payloads and diversity give battle group commanders greater flexibility when planning strike missions.

According to Penfield, the new Super Hornet is the right plane, in the right place, at the right time.

“The Super Hornet is raising the bar on how we will project power overseas.

It’s an evolutionary plane, not a revolutionary plane,” he said.

As with all new innovations, concerns about reliability and performance are in the minds of the warfare commanders and those using the equipment.

In Pritchard’s mind, there’s nowhere he’d rather be than in the cockpit of the Super Hornet.

“I think even though it is a new jet, we put it through an entire set of workups. We’ve really had a good chance to troubleshoot the jet, groom them, getting them down to where we like them, so I don’t think we’ll have any problems,” he said. “To be honest, I was excited by the jet when I came into the

program. I’m a Super Hornet baby because it’s all I’ve ever flown. I had high expectations, and it’s beat every one of those. The whole jet is awesome.”

Part of the Chief of Naval Operations’ overall vision of “Sea Power 21,” the Super Hornet’s greater firepower, endurance and its multi-mission capabilities as an all-weather strike fighter, are quickly proving that it is much more than just the new kid on the block.

As the “E” model Super Hornet continues its deployment with Lincoln and CVW-14, deployment workups continue with the “F” model, which will eventually replace the Navy’s fleet of F-14 Tomcats.



100th F/A-18E/F Super Hornet Delivered to US Navy

*Denise Deon Wilson
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The Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), Adm. Vern Clark, joined an audience of fleet operators, Navy F/A-18 program leadership, Boeing executives and production line personnel, to celebrate the 100th delivery of an F/A-18E/F Super Hornet. The airplane, a two-seat “F” model, was delivered during a ceremony on Friday, June 14, 2002, at Boeing in St. Louis, Mo.

“The 100th Super Hornet is a significant milestone in this very successful program,” said Adm. Clark. “The Hornet Industry-Navy team is producing an aircraft with greater range, striking power and survivability that will project dominant and decisive offensive power around the world well into the 21st century.”

The F/A-18F delivered to the U.S. Navy is slated to become part of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 102, currently a F-14 squadron (VF-102) scheduled to transition to Super Hornet in the near future.



Members of the Hornet Industry Team gather for a photo with the CNO (center) during the 100th delivery of an F/A-18E/F Super Hornet.

HARM Shot From A+ Hornet



AGM-88 High-speed Anti Radiation Missile (HARM)

Nicolette Cormier

The Hornet A+ program moved yet another step forward recently when an AGM-88 HARM (High-speed Anti Radiation Missile) was successfully launched from an upgraded F/A-18 Hornet.

The missile was fired from a Reserve Carrier Air Wing 20 (CVWR-20) F/A-18A+, flown by Strike Fighter Squadron 203 (VFA-203), home based

at Naval Air Station Atlanta. The F/A-18 Weapons System Integration team was on hand to provide technical assistance for the shot, which took place at Point Mugu, Calif.

The HARM is a supersonic air-to-surface tactical missile designed to seek and destroy enemy radar defense systems.

The launch was a significant achievement for the A+ program, which initially began in 1995. Upgrades to the

A+ aircraft include: upgraded mission computers, radar systems, weapon systems, and an embedded global positioning navigation system.

The upgraded "A+" model has the new weapons capabilities and software commonalities of the much newer "C/D" models. This gives the Navy the ability to take older aircraft that are structurally sound, upgrade them, and add them to the mix of carrier deployable aircraft.

Chet Bracuto, F/A-18A-D Air Vehicle Team lead, said, "When you're on the carrier with three F/A-18 squadrons, and two are "C" models and one is an "A+" model; there is no longer a lack in capabilities for the "A" model. All of them can now be employed to carry out the same missions with the same warfighting capabilities"

The success of the HARM shot depended largely on the 15C+ Software Configuration Set (SCS) that is currently used in the "C/D" models, and has been loaded onto the "A+" models as part of the upgrade process.



Aircrew and Maintainers from VFA-122, NAS Lemoore, Calif., ferried two F/A-18F models to England for the Farnborough Air Show 22-28 July 2002.

The Super Hornet stole the show each day in an air show demonstration flown by Boeing Test Pilot Ricardo Traven.

Pictured left to right, AEC Richard Zeimet, Lt. Joseph Guerrein, Cmdr. Mark Adamshick, AO2 Rashon McCall, and Lt. Greg Newkirk.



F/A-18 Program Awards \$1.9 Billion Contract to GE Aircraft Engines



Leaders representing the U.S. Navy and GE Aircraft Engines recently participated in an F414 Multi-Year contract signing ceremony held in Washington, D.C. Pictured are (back row, left to right) Gary Reese, GE; Mike Heffner, USN; John Mulholland, GEAE; Lt. Cmdr. Jim Hiles, USN; Rob Lessel, USN; Jim Caplan, GEAE; Terrence O'Connell, USN; Angie Chiango, GEAE; and Connie Gayle, USN. Seated are Capt. Jeff Wieringa, USN (left); and George Bolln, GEAE.

F/A-18 Program

On July 2, the U.S. Navy awarded a five-year Multi-Year Procurement (MYP) contract to GE Aircraft Engines (GEAE) for F414 engines, devices and spare modules. The contract, valued at \$1.9 billion, includes a total of 480 engines over five years. By signing a multi-year contract, the Navy will save over \$50 million. Twin F414 engines power the U.S. Navy F/A-18E/F Super Hornet Strike Fighter.

The contract is for a planned quantity of 480 install engines and devices with flexibility to adjust quantities between 420 and 625 units to meet U.S. Navy needs. The initial 480-unit award includes five years of install engines and devices as well as spare engines, devices and modules for the first year, and is valued at \$1.917 billion. Deliveries under this contract

will take place from March 2003 through February 2008.

The contract also includes options to procure additional spares on an annual basis. These options would result in \$161 million of additional sales if fully exercised.

"My hat is off to everyone involved in making this multi-year procurement a reality," said Captain Jeff Wieringa, NAVAIR Program Manager for the F/A-18, during the recent MYP contract signing ceremony in Washington. "I'm continually impressed with this team. Today's contract award is a good deal for the F/A-18 program, for GE and, most importantly, for the fleet."

"This multi-year contract is truly a win-win for the U.S. Navy and GE," said Jim Caplan, GE's F414 Program Director. "It provides the Navy with \$50 million in savings while giving GEAE, our employees, and our

suppliers stable volume."

A multi-year procurement has many benefits for the government and the contractor. Specifically it provides the most economical method to procure the engine by yielding substantial savings over traditional, single-year procurement scenarios. In a multi-year environment, savings are captured by eliminating annual, nonrecurring start up costs, including proposal preparation and negotiation, subcontract negotiation, and tooling set-up. A multi-year procurement also allows the contractor to better plan the production flow and facility utilization, which reduces the recurring production and sustaining engineering costs.

Of the 299 F414 engines covered by previous contracts, 250 have been delivered to Naval Air Station Lemoore, Calif., and Naval Test Center China Lake, Calif.



“Boots on the Ground” Meets at Lemoore

Nicolette Cormier

With their “Boots on the Ground” the leadership from the NAVAIR F/A-18 Program office recently met at NAS Lemoore, Calif. for an out-brief regarding fleet improvements on the maintainability of the F/A-18 Hornet. Lemoore was the second Hornet site to be inspected by Boots on the Ground after the program’s initial kick off in April, at NAS Oceana, Va. Boots on the Ground is a Naval Aviation wide program based on an initiative of the Navy Readiness Integrated Improvement Program.

The program consists of a team of engineers, maintenance and logistics personnel from various NAVAIR program offices and Naval Air Facilities. The team’s objective is to remove barriers and improve the availability of the F/A-18 Hornet. Once barriers are identified, the team works with the various squadrons and departments to form a plan to eliminate the obstacles. The removal process takes place over a six-week period. At the end of six weeks, a team of flag officers from NAVICP, PEO(T) and NAVAIR travel to the base for an out-briefing.

Capt. Jeff Wieringa, F/A-18 program manager, Capt. Win Everett, deputy program manager for fleet support, and Capt. (s) Steve Bartlett, deputy assistant program manager for logistics, accompanied the out-briefing team to Lemoore.

As part of the program’s procedure, during the initial visit, the team picks three areas in which to identify barriers that slow down the maintainability of the aircraft. At Lemoore, the team concentrated on Radar, FLIR and Flight Control Surfaces.

Everett said, “The barrier removal teams focused on improvements in the customer wait time for radar repairs, in light of the fact that the radar is a high O-level manpower and readiness drain on the fleet. FLIR is the second highest inductee system at Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Detachment (AIMD)

Lemoore, and transportation for flight control surfaces was identified as another barrier. Inadequate means of transportation packaging, and excessive movement of Flight Control Surfaces between O and I levels had caused delays of several days getting parts back and forth between the squadron and the AIMD.”

Successful criteria for removing the transportation barrier was to use a designated time schedule at each hangar for pick up and drop off of Ready For Issue and Not Ready For Issue parts.

“One of the things the team specifically investigated was the transportation time in getting the flight controls to the squadron from AIMD and back. It used to take three to five days to do this until the squadron realized they could get their own maintenance personnel to pick them up. This reduced that time considerably. However, improper packing of the surfaces prior to the transportation was creating more damage. The barrier removal team addressed this issue and looked into the non-destructive inspection technicians coming to the aircraft to perform their inspection,” said Everett.

Once the barrier removal team has done its job, a summary of findings is put together and the process is mapped out. All barriers require a different level of effort; some are on going, many are combined; others are easily solved.

Everett believes the program is working because the team is “cross functional,” with members from various U.S Navy Bases utilizing previous maps, giving them a distinct advantage in identifying barriers. Lean manufacturing facilitators were members on all mapping sessions and implemented Lean techniques. (Lean manufacturing is a process whereby production is carried out safely at the lowest cost with the most efficient methods.)

Because of the mapping sessions the Lemoore radar barrier was easily solved. Everett said, “The Lemoore radar barrier was a good example of the success of mapping. The perception and fleet

practice within the squadron was that Lot 12 aircraft and greater required only a -150 RE (radar receiver exciter). Maintainers believed that use of -140 RE caused erroneous built-in-test-codes. This perception was refuted through comprehensive testing at the squadron and AIMD. “Now,” he said, “maintainers are using both REs, which helps out time-wise during the maintenance process.”

Once the barriers are removed or a resolution is underway, the team moves on. At the present time a barrier removal team is visiting MCAS Miramar, Calif. The out-briefing for that base will take



Hornet Website Adds Two More Links

The Hornet Hyperlink, the U.S Navy’s F/A-18 web site, adds two more exciting links to its website this month. You can now read the *Hornet Buzz* on-line for F/A-18 news. The *Buzz* is published monthly, and contains current fleet news, photos and features.

If you’re interested in the Hornets’ latest technology upgrades, check out the video of the latest F/A-18A-D 10.7 Software Upgrade. The video highlights the high angle of attack improvements the software has brought to the A-D models. To view the web site, go to <http://pma265.navair.navy.mil>

Out and About With The Fleet



F/A-18 Hornets Fly in Formation

Operation Enduring Freedom -- U.S. Navy F/A-18 Hornet strike fighter aircraft assigned to Carrier Air Wing One Seven (CVW-17) fly in formation after launching from the aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73). The squadrons pictured, include the VFA-83 "Rampagers" (lower-left), the VFA-81 "Sunliners" (center), and the VFA-34 "Blue Blasters" (top). George Washington and her Battlegroup are on a regularly scheduled deployment, conducting missions in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. U.S. Navy photo by Captain Dana Potts.

F/A-18 Hornet Prepares for a Night Launch

At sea aboard USS George Washington (CVN 73) Aug. 2, 2002 -- An F/A-18 Hornet from "Rampagers" of Strike Fighter Squadron Eight Three (VFA-83) prepares for a night launch from one of four steam driven catapult systems on the ship's flight deck. Washington and Carrier Air Wing One Seven (CVW-17) are on a regularly scheduled deployment conducting combat missions in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 2nd Corey T. Lewis.



Unloading Bullets from an F/A-18 Hornet

At sea aboard USS George Washington (CVN 73) Jun. 30, 2002 -- Chief Aviation Ordnanceman Micheal McCaulley (right) from Denver, CO, and Aviation Ordnanceman 1st Class Juan Perales (left) from San Antonio, TX, unload bullets from an F/A-18 Hornet assigned to the "Sunliners" of Strike Fighter Squadron Eight One (VFA-81). George Washington is home ported in Norfolk, VA, and is on a regularly scheduled six-month deployment conducting missions in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate Airman Jessica Davis.

Ready to Launch

At sea aboard USS George Washington (CVN 73) July 21, 2002 -- Sailors conduct final checks before launching an F/A 18 Hornet from the "Sunliners" of Strike Fighter Squadron Eight One (VFA-81). The Washington is on a scheduled deployment conducting combat missions in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate Airman Jessica Davis.



Out and About With The Fleet



Loading a Sidewinder Missile onto a Hornet

At sea aboard USS George Washington (CVN 73) July. 3, 2002 – Aviation Ordnanceman 2nd Class Jeremy Moore from Houston, TX, loads an inert CATM-9 Sidewinder missile onto an F/A-18 Hornet aircraft assigned to the “Blue Blasters” of Strike Fighter Squadron Three Four (VFA-34). Washington is on a regularly scheduled deployment, conducting missions in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. U.S. Navy photo by Photographer’s Mate Airman Jessica Davis.



Hornet Releases MK-83's at Patuxent River

An F/A-18C Hornet from VX-23 squadron, Naval Air Station Patuxent River, releases MK-83 bombs during a series of Advanced Targeting Forward Looking Infrared (ATFLIR) adjacent stores separation testing over the Atlantic Test Range. This phase of testing is currently being conducted to verify safe separation of various weapons when released adjacent to ATFLIR on F/A-18C/Ds. Piloting the aircraft was Cmdr. William “Roto” Reuter, VX-23 with coordination from Thomas Carron, NAVAIR 4.11.2 project engineer and Lt. Tom Frosch, VX-23 project officer. Photo by Vernon Pugh.

